

Preparing your Personal Statement

Your personal statement is an opportunity to express your personality and share relevant experience and enthusiasm for the subject you're interested in. Follow these 4 stages to ensure yours stands out from the rest!

1: Preparation and research

- Check and read the course information online and think about what skills and qualities we'll be looking for
- Write a list of things you want to include
- Start drafting your statement early on – try not to leave it to the last minute!

2: What to include

- Why you're interested in the subject
- Your enthusiasm for the subject
- How your previous studies relate to the course
- Relevant work experience, placements, jobs and/or volunteering
- Any activities or hobbies that show your interest and show your personality
- Any training or achievements that show your skills
- Overall, demonstrate you're a great candidate
- Include your future career aspirations
- Should you be deciding to change your field of study please explain why

3: How to write it

- Start with an introductory sentence that encourages the reader to continue
- Map out the structure in an order that's most relevant to what we're looking for
- End with a sentence or two that reinforces your commitment, enthusiasm and relevant skills
- Check your grammar and punctuation
- Allow time to gather feedback and update with amends

4: Important notes

- Keep your statement brief – no more than 500 words
- Make sure you don't copy – we'll detect similarities and this could jeopardise your application



Preparing your Reference

A reference is a brief statement written by someone who knows you professionally or academically. It supports your application by providing further detail on your approach to study and/or your suitability for higher education. It's an essential and influential part of your application.

Who should write it?

If you're currently at school or college, ask your tutor, teacher or head teacher. If you're no longer in education, ask an employer, volunteering supervisor or trainer. Do not ask family, friends or partners – they will not be considered a suitable reference.

What should the reference include?

Do let your referee know what course you're applying to as it will assist them to make their reference as relevant as possible. Also share your Personal Statement with them so they know what areas to focus on. Here are some examples of what your reference should include:

- Existing achievement
- Motivation towards the subject area you are applying for
- How long they have known you
- Relevant skills achievement (whether certified or not)
- Academic potential (other than predicted grades)
- Powers of analysis and independent thought
- Relevant curriculum enrichment and other activities
- Relevant work experience
- Any factors that may have affected or might affect your performance

Checklist

Your reference should be written in English

It must be written by someone who knows you professionally or academically

Make sure it aligns to your own personal statement

It's useful for the referee to include how long they've known you

If your referee is one of your teachers, they can add your predicted grades

It should be a maximum of 500 words

